

Water Transfer Work Group
Minutes
June 26, 2006
10:30 A.M.

In Attendance: Bob Barwin, Ecology; Dave Brown, City of Yakima; Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation; Jim Davis, SMID; Paul Dempsey, Various; Rick Dieker, YTID; Stephen Fanciullo, Reclamation; Bill Ferry, Reclamation; Chuck Garner, Reclamation; Dan Haller, Ecology; Stan Isley, Ecology/YRBWEP, Chris Lynch, Reclamation; Larry Martin, Various; Joe Mentor, Mentor Law Group; Jim Milton, WRM/TCWRA; Tom Ring, Yakama Nation; Jeff Slothower, TCC; Tom Tebb, Ecology; Ron Van Gundy, Roza ID; Melissa Downes, Ecology; Jim Blanchard, Reclamation; Nea Welch-Timmons, Reclamation; John Dyson, Reclamation-YFO; Amanda Cronin & Kelly McCaffrey, WWT/Teaaway (by phone).

Chuck Garner called the meeting to order at 10:30 am. The first agenda item was the May 15, 2006 minutes. The minutes had not been submitted and review and approval was postponed.

The group began by discussing transfer applications 2006 – 15 through 18, Taylor Ranches, LLC. The Taylor project was partially funded by the Conservation District (CD) under the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program (YTAHP). A question was raised whether there was any chance that the current point of diversion would go dry during the irrigation season. Tom Tebb agreed to look at this. Tom Ring and Reclamation representatives agreed pending outcome of Ecology's investigation. (Subsequently, Tom Tebb responded to this question by email.)

The Group next considered application 2006-19 WWT, Teaaway Valley Family Farms. Kelly McCaffrey and Amanda Cronin were on the phone for WWT. Request is to keep water right in trust program for an additional 15 years and to extend the purpose of use on 16.5 acres from irrigation to instream flow. The group gave approval.

The Group next considered Selah-Moxee Irrigation District request for a temporary additional point of diversion for another year. Motion for Order filed concurrently in Court. TT asked if diversion can be moved back since it washed away in 2000. JD asked that since last year was worst case and group approved; shouldn't this year be smoother? Dan Haller voiced approval. TT asked what is the long term plan. JD responded that he intended to renew request until the end of the adjudication. Stan Isley stated that the upstream move of the POD creates a hole; although small, it does affect "flip-flop." TR stated that a "small" move is relative and that the justification given in the petition is different than that presented to the working group; then asked if there was some unstated issues. JD responded that diversion could not go back to where it was and they'll take what they can get of their right where and when they can. The diversion is washed-out and the district wants to pipe from all its diversions from Pomona .

SI asked whether pumps in the waste-way could be re-engineered. JD responded that it was too much money. Steve Fanciullo noted that the "drop" was not built to specifications. JD stated that the canal contains a "bump" and the source is the river, not the canal. SF asked why not use the trust water right to resolve the problem; shouldn't there be some mitigation for the change of POD? JD responded that this was not the proper forum for these issues; that S-M spent good money for that trust water and the effect on the reach does not equal the amount of trust water. SF remarked that there was opposition. There was also a question about the instantaneous flow as stated in the petition. JD responded that he had not noticed the error and the figures should match those in the work group worksheet. TR noted that we were here to look at the specific request for this year and that he was Ok for this year but that the long term solution would be conservation measures to mitigate the POD move.

Chris Lynch then mentioned to all to get in worksheet proposals earlier to allow time for review.

The Group next heard Dan Haller, Ecology, explain the "Yakima Cabin owners' Bill," Senate Bill 6861, which becomes effective on July 1, 2006, and authorizes the department to study and collect information of water use by cabin owners and others. SF asked whether it would be more efficient to research other water users at the same time. DH responded that legislation limits scope of study.

The Group next heard Bob Barwin, Ecology, discuss the 'Yakima Basin Water Budget Neutral Project Policy" with handout. This policy will help enable future water banking, expands 2004 efforts, allows environmental benefits to be credited, and includes vetting process with stakeholders. BB asked for review by work group and comments by phone or email to him with follow-up with group in August/September. Larry Martin asked about the obligation against local impairment. BB responded that policy works best for curtailed juniors.

Next meeting will be on July 24 at 10:00 a.m.